

FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION

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Alison Arnold Writes...

The Fourth of July has come and gone. It seems only yesterday that we were rejoicing in pussywillows and peepers. Duxbury's Fourth still has its parade, but firecrackers, fireworks and the bonfire have been banned.

The other day I came across a 1914 diary in which I described the Fourth of July of that year. I wrote: "It has been a perfect day. Not hot and not cold. In the morning there was a parade. It was a good one with decorated wagons and a band.

"After the parade we went to Wright's Field (behind the library), where games were played such as pigeon shoot, races, etc. We got some ice-cream and peanuts.

"This afternoon we went back to the field, where there was a ball game and the band played all the afternoon. For dinner we had salmon with egg sauce and peas, little new potatoes with parsley, and for dessert, strawberry shortcake. Katie let me whip the cream.

"We had a red, white and blue centerpiece on the table, made up of flowers from the garden -- red roses, shasta daisies and blue larkspur.

"Later there were beautiful fireworks in the town square (where the flagpole is now at the junction of St. George St. and Powder Point Ave.). Mother and Father went to the dance at the Yacht Club. The pier was decorated with Japanese lanterns."

So much for Duxbury's Fourth of July in 1914.

In later years when my children were small the Duxbury American Legion reserved 3 days as Duxbury

Days. Crowds came from far and wide. There were games and a Midway, and a beauty contest in the afternoon. Twenty-five years ago the ferris wheel broke down, resulting in injuries to many.

The parade, now held in the afternoon, has grown larger and more elaborate year after year and visitors from out of town crowd the streets. No bonfire and fireworks light up the night sky and no firecrackers bang and pop in the early hours of the morning.

But I still have salmon and peas and strawberry shortcake, and a red, white and blue centerpiece. Tradition persists.